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THE DVTIES OF

Such as wiſh for the advancement and preſervation of
TRVE RELIGION
In thoſe dayes.

Shortly declared in certaine Poſitions.

PSALME, 41. 1,
Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poore : the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble,

Printed in the yeare 1639.

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THE

DVTIES

OF

Such as vvish for the advancement and preſervation of

TRVE RELIGION

In thoſe dayes.

Shortly declared in certaine Poſitions.

1. THe Children of Sion, all of them that wiſh from their heart the welfare of their Mother, cannot but be ſorrofull for her miſery.

2. If they haue a true ſorrow for her miſeries, they muſt needs alſo haue a deſire that they may be taken away.

3. If they haue ſuch a deſire indeed, they cannot be without a willingneſſe to helpe to redreſſe them.

4. And if there be a ſincere will to helpe to redreſſe the publick miſeries of the Church, there will of neceſſity follow a readineſſe to indevour the worke according to ability, by lawfull and poſſible meanes.

But if there be no endevour at al, it is evident there is no willingneſſe to helpe, & if no willingneſſe to help to redreſſe evils, then alſo no deſire that evils may be taken away. And if no deſire that evils may be takē away, then alſo no ſorrow for the ſame. & if there be no ſorrow for the miſery of the Church, there is alſo no true affections or wiſhes for the welfare therof. & if this be not in the heart of a publick Profeſſor, it is apparent he hath no true heart to Sion, and ſo is none of her Children, and whatſoever otherwiſe he may pretend in ſhew, is but an hypocritall appearance of affection which the day of tryall will diſcover.

Now then, if a man do thinke himſelfe a true Child of this afflicted Mother, let him try his heart by reall affects, and not by the ſelfe deceit of flattering and imaginary griefe, which may come in his minde, with a tranſitory flaſh of Condoling the publick miſeries when evill newes are brought into his eares. It is eaſie to ſimpathize a little with the miſeries of the Church, when they are related to us, and to utter ſome apprehenſion of preſent, or of future evils, with the flouriſh of a Complaint over the miſery of the times: But what is this to a childiſh affection, that ſeeth his Mother in diſtreſſe and extremity, ſet upon by Robbers, and lies to be torne in peeces by her enimies? What is this to a brotherly heart that ſeeth his mothers ſonne in extreame danger of life? Do you thinke that he would reſt in ſuch a Complaint, and not be ready to put forth his hands to helpe his brother, or his Mother in ſuch a Caſe? Certainly no, if there were in him any ſparke of filiall or brotherly affection. So then theſe are times wherein the Children of Sion are to be made manifeſt, for thoſe that know her miſeries, and will not really endeavour to redreſſe them by lawful and poſſible meanes, according to their ability, are none of hers, but ſtrangers: Let us not therfore flatter our ſelves with vayne words and ſhewes of affection, the time is come wherin deeds are required. Therfore to ſhew the nature of theſe deeds, I briefly thus proceed.

If the Children of Sion are bound in conſcience all of them to indeavour according to their ability the redreſſe of her miſeries, then every one ought to do theſe things.

1. To take notiſe of the true ſtate and Cauſe of her miſeries.

2. To

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2. To consider with himselfe what he is able to do, in helping to take away the cause.

3. To forecast how that which he is able to doe, may be most effectually put in execution.

4. To fall to the execution of that worke as soone as ever hee can conveniently. for under these foure points, all orderly endeavours of this nature are comprehended, therefore of these more distinctly and particularly.

Of the first Duty:

IF wee ought to take notice of the true State and cause of the misery of the Church, then we should conceive of them in a two fold respect. Both in respect of the Church to which the evil befals. and in respect of the nature and property of the evill in it selfe, which befalleth to it.

As Concerning the true Church of Christ, this is the right State and condition of it, that it is a Society of Saints called out of this evill world, to live in the Spirit of Christ by his word, to the glory of God in the advancement of their mutuall Salvation. As long as these properties of a Church are obserued amongst those that make profession of the Gospell, the Church cannot be said to be in misery, for every thing is well and happie, so long as it enjoyeth intirely its own being and natural properties. But if any thing befall unto it, whereby that being is destroyed, then it is said truely to be in misery, and that which is the cause of the destruction of its being, is the cause of its misery: so thē we may conclude thus, If the visible professours of the Gospell of Christ at this time, bee visibly a Society, and be sanctified by their obedience to the heavenly calling. So that they are indeed visibly seperated from this evill world, and live in the spirit and by the word, and glorifie God, and advance their mutuall edification. Then the Church visiblie is in no misery but truely happy. But if the visible Professors of the gospel, be not in this estate, thē the visible Church is truly miserable, and all that hindereth and destroyeth those properties in it, is the cause of its miseries.

Therfore now we are to take notice of that which causeth want:

1. *Of their Visible Society.*
2. *Of their visible Sanctification.*
3. *Of their visible Separation from the evill world.*
4. *Of their visible life in the Spirit.*
5. *Of their visible obedience unto the word.*
6. *Of their Visible glorifying of God.*
7. *Of their visible advancement of one another to salvation.*

If the things which destroy these properties be observed, as they befall to the Church, and as they are evill in their owne nature, then wee shall truely understand the cause and State of the misery which oppresseth the Church: Therefore to thinke of this matter, Let us see what is the cause of the want of Society amongst the visible Professors of the Gospell, and then what is the cause of the want of all the rest of these properties.

The cause of the want of Society, is either a carelessenes where by every one looketh only to himselfe, and not also to the things of others. Contrary to the intention of God in framing the Church to *be one Body in Christ*, 1 *Cor* 12.25.26. and contrary to the commandement of the Apostle, *Phil.* 2.4. Or elle an *Alienation* and contrariety of Affections, whereby the Professours of the Gospel are opposite one to another in the Course of their profession. not onely not labouring to entertaine the *vnity of the Spirit in the Bond of peace*, as we ought to doe *Ephe.* 4.3. but rather endeavouring to bite and devoure one another, and so in effect to consume one another in there society *Gal.* 5.15. And the cause of both this *Careleſſenes* and *Alienation*. is a selfe seking of every one, whereby he intendeth to set np his owne knowledge and practise above others, and intendeth not in love and meekneſſe to accomodate himselfe and his guifts to the profit of others, according to the measure of their Capacitie, which is nevertheleſſe the end wherefore God hath given *al his gifts to every on*. 1 *Cor*. 12.7. Now from this self-seking, do all these Schismes proceed, which haue destroyed the visible Society of the Professours. And by this meanes *Sects* and parties arising amongst the *Professours*, they injury one another, and multiply Scandals to the dishonouring of the Gospell,

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For which the Iugment of God is poured out upon them, and justly all miseries befall them, because they haue helped to turne the sweetnesse of the Gospell of peace, into the bitternesse of Gall and wormewood, by strife and contention, whiles they did not labour earnestly to prevent those Schismes, or to take them away in due time. The cause of the want of visible Sanctification in the Professors of the Gospell, is the want of Godly zeale in the practice of piety. And this Zeale is wanting because the knowledge of things belonging to the Conscience, is not so much taught and apprehended, as of things belonging to *Theoreticall speculation*, wherin most men now dayes put the whole substance of Religion and faith, from whence ariseth the earnestnes about matters of dispute, because they suppose that all Religion, Truth and Faith is lost and overthrowne, if any of their preconceived tenets be not received and entertained in that sence wherein they underderstand them. And therfore they are al busie to rectifie & enform the notiõs of their understanding, & forget in the mean while their hearts and their practises, wherein the *state* of Regeneration and holines ought to be perfected. Now frõ the neglect & forgetfulnes of perfecting holinesse in their inward and outward life, the habits of sinne takes place more and more, which darken their vnderstandings, & quench the good motions of the spirit, & make them wholy voyde of that trueth which is after godlinesse, which should rule their consciences in all actions. whereof they being destitute by nature, and not being taught in the ordinary course of the ministry, they fall to this, that they are content with an outward, moral, and formall profession, and neuer seeke to God further, except it be in the Theory or Controversies

Now from the want of these two Foundamentall properties, (*viz*:) *Society* and *Sanctification*, and from the causes thereof, proceedeth the want of all the other properties of the Church, wherein the visible and spirituall happinesse thereof Consisteth: for wher there is no care to maintaine mutuall Society, and no knowledge of Conscionable duties in the practise of piety, there can be no

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ſeperation from the evill world, there can be no life of the ſpirit of God, there can be no true obedience to the word of God, and Conſequently there God cannot be glorified, nor the ſalvation of men mutuably advanced, and ſo all the properties of the Church are taken away by theſe cauſes: which we thus conſidered in reſpect of the Church to which they befall, which are to be thought ſo much the more pernitious by how much the Sion of God our heavenly mother is in her ſelfe glorious, as the joy of the whole earth. Deare unto Chriſt our Saviour, who hath redeemed her with his own precious Blood, and to be beloved by us, who are begotten in her, and called to the fruition of life eternall.

Now the other reſpect under which theſe evils may be conſidered in themſelus, is this, that we take notice of them how pernitious they are and hateful in their firſt beginings, how hurtfull they are in their progreſſe, and how dangerous in their iſſue and finall period. There beginings are from the inward ſpawne of our Corrupt nature, and from the father thereof the Devill, who is the author of al diviſions and all vnholineſſe. Their progreſſe wee may ſe to be hurtful that evidently the viſible eſtate of the Church her happineſſe is chaunged thereby into extreame miſery and deſolation, Religion decayeth, Jgnorance, Superſtition and all ungodlineſſe increaſeth, perſecution and cruelty prevaileth, & the inviſible perfections of the true Regenerate, for want of a holie cõmuniõ with others in ſpirituall things, are exceedingly impaired & ſtayed in their grouth. Their end & final period can be nothing els but the vtter deſolation of all churches and common wealths through warre, famine and peſtilence, which the wrath of God hath begun to ſend forth upon almoſt all the nations of *Europe*, and the eternall damnation of thoſe that in their publick or priuate Courſes of life, either make themſelves inſtruments of Sathan to foment the Cauſes of theſe evils in the profeſſion of the Goſpel, or elſe (knowing what they ought to do in redreſſing theſe evils) neglect their duties, and detaine the truth and grace of God in ſilence; and unrighteouſneſſe, as a light vnder a buſhell, or a talent hidden under the ground. For in this Caſe he that is not openly with Chriſt for the preſervation of his Church and Goſpel, is directly againſt him

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and will deſervedly be dealt withall as an adveſary Therefore let us now come to the ſecond point which is to ſhew how everie one ought to conſider with himſelfe what he is able to do, to helpe according to ability, to redreſſe theſe Cauſes and miſeries of the Church.

Of the ſecond Duty

WEE haue now ſeene that the cauſe of all miſery in the Church is, ſummarily and originally a twofould want, Firſt of Care to entertaine ſpirituall Society one with another. Secondly, of Godly zeale and knowledge in the practiſe of piety: If theſe two wel-ſprings of our miſery can be ſtopped in the Courſe of our publick profeſſion, we ſhall liue in a ſanctified Society one with another in the Goſpell, and then it is certaine that there ſhall bee no bleſſing wanting for the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith that *There the Lord commandeth a bleſſing even life for evermore Pſal.*133.3. Therfore every one that beleeveth it to be ſo, is bound in conſcience to help according to his ability to advance this ſtate of the Church, otherwiſe he is like to proue but a ſtranger that hath a falſe heart to the welfare thereof. Now the ability of every man that is a profeſſed member of the Church, is twofold either *Spirituall* or *Corporall*, or rather both *Spirituall* and *Corporall*. For every one ought to be a member of this body in both theſe reſpects, and every member in everie reſpect hath its owne ſeverall guift and ability to ſerue and profit the whole body within its own place, upon which ground we thus proceed further.

If there be any ſpirituall ability in a man, it is in the light of his vnderſtanding, and in the Commotions of his wil and affections: by the vnderſtanding through light he is able to apprehend, to ſearch and diſcearne out things to be Conſidered off, and haueing found them to diſpoſe and order them to the Capacity of others. See then, theſe abilities ought to be-applyed to the Conſideration of the evils of the Church, to apprehend ſearch out, diſcerne and ſet forth before the eyes of his owne underſtanding the cauſes and remedy therof, in ſuch a manner that others alſo may be able to com-

prehend them: But if a man doth not apply the light of his understanding to think upon these objects, it is evident that he withdraweth his spiritual ability from the service of the church in these times of her greatest distresse, and so deserveth to be given ouer to the darkenesses of foolish imaginations, because he loveth not to thinke upon that which is most necessary and profitable for the Kingdome of God, that the light may shine before others to help them in the darknesse of these miserable Confusions wherein now all doe lie almost drowned, By the Commotion of the will and affections. A man may stir himselfe up to move for the Church three waies. 1. Towards God. 2. Towards himselfe. 3. Towards his neighbour.

Towards God, he ought to moue in the desire of his heart by humble prayer to beseech him, that hee would be pleased to take away the Causes of the misery, & send forth instruments fitted with guifts to apply the necessary remedies, If therefore in his prayer he seeketh not for this at the throwne of grace, it is apparent that he neglecteth to pray for the coming of the Kingdome of God, which consisteth in righteousnesse, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost, all which is now wanting in the *Visible Society* of the Church.

Towards himselfe, he ought to moue by earnest resolutions, & holy purposes to goe out of this *Babell* and Confusion wherein we stand, by freeing his owne minde and affection from all Sectary and Scismaticall intentions, and his publick profession of Religion from the sports of malice, hatred, prejudice, murmerings, raylings and contentiousnesse, that he may be found unblamable in loue at the coming of the Lord Iesus.

Towards his neighbours he ought to moue by compassion in pitying those that goe astray, from the truth, and giue Scandals to others in their violent passions, and practises, and by good example to goe before them in Charitable judgments and courses of life, & by holy provocations, exhortations and entreaties to draw them out of the Snares of Sathan: to follow the duties of mutuall edefication, and to intend the duties of holy communion. Now if hee worketh not these resolutions and motions upon his own wil and affections, it cannot be denyed, but that he is of a Schismaticall spirit

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and disposition, and so is guilty of the Causes of this misery wherin the Church is plunged, and therefore ought betimes to reforme his hear, tand purge it from the secret dispostion of Careleſsnes alienations oppositions and selfe seeking, where withall it is possessed. For it is Certaine that if the former good resolutions be not formed, in it, the oposite dispositions are, because it is impossible that the heart can be voyd of both, and let him with all remember that his *Heart is hard to be knowne*, because it is *Deceitfull above all things and desperately wicked Ier. 17.9*, Therefore he ought not to passe the matter lightly, nor leave of this endeavour, till he finde these resolutions perfectly setled in it, least perhaps he be found to be one of those that help to bring this desolation upon the Church of God. These then are the abilities of the Spirit wherein those that ought to be most Spirituall, viz: the *Preachers of the Gospell* should shew themselves before others as pat ternes of light in the midst of this froward generation.

Now againe, if there by any bodily, or outward ability in a man, it is the livelihood of his actions or in the usefulnesse of his possessions:

The livelihood of a mans actions, ought to be imployed for the good of the Church, in opening his mouth to speake for the cause thereof, and to giue advice by way of writing, or otherwise in that which is requisite in going, or comeing and taking paines for the advancement of the affaires therof, to sollicite or perform as a willing servant of the publick good, that which he shall find needfull or profitable to be done for the advancement of peace, vnity and holinesse, and such like graces amongst the *Professors of the Gospel*: which if a man be unwilling to doe when he is able; I cannot see how he is sayd to haue a sincere affection towards the wellfare and prosperity of Ierusalem: For it is certaine that aman will not bee vnwilling to imploy himselfe, and spend his time in that which he doth truely effect. But if a man will spend no time, no thoughts, no Service for the publick good of the Church: How can it bee said that he is affected towards it: Let therfore every one looke to his time, and actions, whether they be imployed for himselfe and the world onely, or for the Church; and also his distressed brethren

if he doth nothing elſe for theſe, but now and then when he heareth of theire miſeries, to be alitle ſad for them in condoling their eſtate, then he muſt know that an hipocrite doth this as well as he, and that one day he ſhall giue an account of the precious time and actions which he hath ſpent in his own ſelfe pleaſing conceits; whiles he might haue aſſiſted Chriſts membersand his diſtreſſed Church by ſome profittable undertakings, for their reliefe in this time of their extremity.

The uſefulneſſe of mans riches and poſſeſſions, ought to be imployed for the good of the Church in opening his purſe upon fit occaſions, not only to giue ſome almes to thoſe that are exiled & haue loſt all their ſubſtance for the cauſe of Religion, and a good conſcienee; for this is a Common thing which every Hypocrite can and will doe, leaſt he ſhould ſeeme to be hard harted, but alſo to ſpare and lay aſide that which may be ſpared for pious uſes of a publick nature, whereby the *State* of the afflicted Church of God may be aſſiſted in ſome ſpirituall manner. As for example, for the entertaining of ſome Agents that might wholy apply themſelves to ſet a worke, lawfull ſure and eaſie meanes, whereby the Cauſes of deviſions amongſt the *Churches* might be taken away, and true religion eminently advanced: Such as an Agent or two entertaine Correſpondencie and gather up the Counſels of of all the beſt divines of *Europe* in the matters of parcification might be. And ſuch as an other agent or two might be to advance the meanes of godlineſſe, and ſolid learning, both which endeavours are already by ſome vndertaken, nay God willing without difficulty be finiſhed if outward meanes faile not. How uſefull theſe undertakings, nay how neceſſary they are, may be gathered from the ſubſtance of this diſcourſe, and how eaſily both may be affected, is to be conceived by the diſcription of the meanas and manner of bringing theſe matters to paſſe, which elſe wher it is to be explayned. Therfore if the worldly goods ſerve onely thine owne back and belly to maintaine ſuch a Table as becometh thy ranck, and canſt not finde any thing to be ſpared for pious uſes of a publick nature, how can it be ſaid that thou loueſt thy Brethren or the advancement of Religion? The loue of thy belly, of thy Statelineſſe & of this world

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cannot dwell in one heart with the loue of God. If then thou louest thy pleasures and state so, that thou canst not abridge any thing of thy spending to apply to a more holy use, then formerly it hath been, take heed, how thou shalt be able at the last day to give a reckoning to God of thy stewardship of his substance, for it is his, not thine, thou hast no more but the dispensation thereof, and ought to dispose of it according to his will, and most for his glory, and not thine owne vanity and lust.

Therefore if thou canst not finde away, proportion at all to bee alotted for such uses whereby thy poore mother the Church may receiue some releive in her spirituall afflictions (flatter not thy self with vayne words) It is plaine that thou hast no filiall, but an Aliens heart towards her, because thou wilst rather suffer, her to perish for want of helpe, then that a rotten Carkasse of thine should want any point of that ease, pleasure, and pastime which it is wont to enjoy.

You that are now at your ease in *Zyon*, Consider this, lay it to heart, you that must haue so many dishes of meate so, and so dressed, you that must be neighbour like, and feast your friends at such and such time, that drinke your wine in boules and eate the lambs out of the flock and the Calves out of the midst of the stale, that lye upon beds of Ivory, and stretch your selves upon your couches, and are not grieved at your heart for the affliction of Joseph, and mourne not for all the abominations that are committed within Ierusalem.

Remember the end of the rich glottton that was cloathed in softe rayment and fared delitiously as you do every day: but suffered poore *Lazarus* to ly at the doore and to receiue comfort of his Doggs, your end shall be like vnto his, except you breake of your sinnes by righteousnesse, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poore state of Sion. Abridge your selues by times of the superfluity of your pleasures and chang the substance that is spent, into Christian Liberrality for pious vses, that you may haue a treasure in heaven, which shall be alotted to your reckoning in the great day of Gods accounts.

Thoſe therefore that want ſufficiences of ſpirituall abilites, or induſtry to abilities or induſtry to apply the livelihood of their bo bodily actions for to aſſiſt the Church of God, if they can ſpare or apply ſome part of their outward Subſtance to further the worke in thoſe that goe about the other parts therof, are bound in conſcience to do it, or elſe they are as far guilty as in them lyeth of the miſeries of the Church, becauſe they will giue no helpe towards the redreſſe of the ſame. And thus much of the ſecond duty. Now let us ſpeake of the third.

Of the third Duty:

When a man once knoweth what he is able to do, in a Spirituall or bodily manner, and moued in his heart to performe his duty: His next care is to forecaſt before he fall to worke, how his undertakeing may become moſt effectuall in the execution.

To doe this, he ought to reflect upon the manner, and vpon the meanes of bringing it to paſſe for the publick good.

The property of every mans vndertaking is anſwerable to the meaſure of his ability, if therefore his ability be in his ſpirituall parts, either in his underſtanding or in his good affection and will. The property of his undertaking will be accordingly either *Doctrinall* or *Hortatory*: if it be *Doctrinall*, his ayme and purpoſe ought to be to cleere neceſſary truthes, in a peaceable way, that is ſo neceſſary uſefull to edefycation. 2. How theſe matters ought to be be deliuered differently to the Capacity of the meaner and more learned ſort, and how the faults hitherto Committed in controverſall Divinity may be avoyded, leaſt the impediment and ſcandalous way of delivery, like unto thornes and briers, choke the fruit and grouth of the good ſeed.

Jf it be *Hortatory* his ayme ought to be to perſwade and enduce mens hearts to the duty of holineſſe in the Communion of Saintes, in the ſhewing forth the neceſſity and uſefulneſſe of edification & vſefulneſſe of mutuall edification, and the meanes whereby it may be attained. 2. The hurtefulneſſe and wickedneſſe of Scandalous and Schiſmaticall practiſes whereby men run headlong, and draw

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others with themſelves into perdition. And how theſe Courſes ought to be avoyded both in matters of Iudgment, and in actions of publick and privace converſion.

Now if any man findeth in himſelfe ſome ſpirituall guift and ability whereby he is fitted to undertake ſome endeavours in either of theſe kindes, and doth it not, or in doing it, laboureth not for this Scope, but hath ſome partiall end, either to ſhew his learning, to ſerve his owne ſide, to weaken and defame his adverſaries, to gaine authority or credit ,or to fulfill ſome other intention which is not directly ſubordinate to the ſervice of God in the Goſpell: He muſt know, that he is an vnprofittable Servant; and one that doth ſcatter more then he doth gather to Jeſus Chriſt.

For the times are ſuch,that he which doth not gather with Chriſt, is Counted to ſcatter abroad from him. For in times of extremity when a man muſt needs periſh if he be not helped, when others can Contribute to his reliefe and doe it not, it is all one in effect to withdraw their helping hand and procure his ruine , for his ruine is infalible,if he be not helped. if a great fire be kindled in a city,which infallibly it be not quenched,will burne up all the houſes thereof, is not he guilty of the burning and may be taken juſtly for one of the incenſaries who can and will not helpe to quench it ? So it is in this caſe, there is a fire kindled againſt the profeſſours of the Goſpell, a fire of ſtrife among themſelves,and a fire of wrath and indignation from God.

Now if thou doſt ſee this fire and the dangers thereof, and wilt neither call out for helpe to others, nor bring one drope of water out of thy well to caſt upon it thy ſelf,is it not apparent that thou art no leſſe guilty of this burning then he is that did kindle the fire? For thou doſt cauſe it now to continue and increaſe with as much, if not with more Cruelty and injuſtice, then he did that cauſed it to breake forth as the firſt.

For perhaps his fault was accedental,& the fire took hold of the houſe before hee was aware , againſt his intention, but thou haſt no excuſe at all if thou doſt not helpe, becauſe thou art called now to undertake ſome endeavour according to ability,to quench

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it. If therefore thou haſt any ſpirituall guifts, eyther for Theoreticall or practicall divinity, and pleaſeſt only thy ſelfe with them at home in thy private Contemplations, thou art like a foole that would goe to his paſtime while he ſeeth his houſe a fire about his eares: or if thou put them forth and doſt not fit them as water to quench this fire, or as balme to be applyed to this wound, thou art like an unnaturall and unthriftie ſonne, who is more willing to ſpend his ſubſtance vpon toyes and trifles which pleaſe his owne fancie, then upon healthfull phiſick which may be able to ſaue his mothers life in her greateſt extremity, or upon food and rayment to refreſh his poore kindred in their deepeſt miſery.

So then to undertake any thing in this kind rightly, the property of a mans ability muſt be fitted to this Scope of edification. To do which, the manner and meanes of attempting the worke ought to be further Conſidered.

The way or manner of undertaking a worke of this nature conſiſteth in frameing the heart aright before a man ſet upon it. Therfore as the effect intended is truely ſpirituall, ſo ther muſt be a true ſpiritual diſpoſition wrought upon the heart that undertaketh, elſe here can be no proportion betwixt the action and the effect which is to follow upon it. Now this ſpirituall diſpoſition conſiſteth in theſe foure qualities.

1. *That the heart be made truely publick in the purpoſe.*

2. *That it be armed with Conſtancie in the Reſolution to follow the purpoſe.*

3. *That it be tempered with humility in following Conſtantly its reſolution.*

4. *And laſtly, that it be affected with vnfained Brotherly loue, & Chriſtian Charity to ſeaſon all the endeavors.*

The heart wil be made truly publick if it reflect upon the nature of Chriſtianity, & for it ſelf at liberty frō the prejudicate thoughts which we uſe to take up when we ſuffer our ſelves to be led away with the humors of one partie more then another. This partialitie is an oppoſite unto Heauenly wiſedome as the Apoſtle Saint *Iames* ſheweth *Chap. 3. Verſ. 17.* And except aman free his heart from this inclination, he cannot truely conceiue what is it to be a Chriſ-

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tian. For a Christian is neither *Iew* nor *Gentile*, neither *Greeke* nor *Barbarian*, neither male nor female, neither bond nor free, neither Circumcised nor uncircumcised: but in al these is a *New-Creature*: wherein *Christ* is all in all *Col*, 3.11. *Gal*. 6.15. Therefore to haue a publick purpose, is to ayme at christianity in it selfe, to intend the estate of Regeneration: amongst all men without difference of Persons, and so consequently to lay downe not onely the name of factions out of our minds, memories & mouths: but also to blot out of our affections the purpose of leaneing more to one side then to another, to one man then to another, or to our own selves more then to others, that nothing may be regarded or thought vpon but onely Christ, in whom all true Christians are one and the same misticall body, which body is only to be looked vnto, and to helpe the building of it up, the publick purpose must be in the heart, otherwise all the endeavours wilbe lame, by reason of the leaven of partiall conceptions which will dogge the execution of that which may be intended.

And to helpe our hearts to this publick disposition, we ought to call to minde that oft times Christ is neerest to the greatest sinners, and that they are sooner brought to the state of Regeneration then those that seeme to be farre advanced in knowledge, as we may see *Mat*. 9.13. & 21.32. And it is Gods wisedome to call the meane and Contemptible things of the world, and to reveale himselfe rather to *Babes* and *Sucklings*, *rather then unto the wise & prudent*. *Mat*. 11.25. Therefore we must conceiue that the word of regeneration, is fittest for those that are in appearance to us furthest from it: So that in the purpose of our heart we must preferre none that knoweth the name of Christ before another, for we know not whom God hath chosen, but our endeavours must be truely publick, and vniversall, dedicated to the whole family of Christ,

The heart will be armed with Constancie in the resolution to follow this purpose.

1. *If we looke not vnto man, but vnto God whose service we shall intend.*

2. *If we remember that it is our duty which we are about, & that whether the effect follow upon it or not, we shall haue our reward.*

3. *If we take up a ſtrong purpoſe to bee patient and not ſubject to irritation, whatſoever wrongs, iniuries, or Croſſes befall unto us in our vndertaking.*

4. *If we call to minde that he is not fit for the Kingdome of God who putteth his hand to the plough and looketh backward. And that he that will ſaue his life by change of reſolution ſhall looſe it, and he that looſeth his life in perſeverance for Chriſt ſhall ſave it. And that a man profiteth nothing to gaine the whole world and looſe his ſoule.*

The heart muſt be ſetled in humility, leaſt the ſtrength of our reſolution make us proud, & confident in our own counſels, Therfore our purpoſes muſt be tempered with meekneſſe and Lowlyneſſe of minde, which is to be wrought upon our hearts.

1. By a Continuall care of Renounceing our ſelves and giving up all our intentions to God.
2. By the remembrance of our unfitneſſe to thinke, or do any good of ourſelves, except God beare us up and carry us along in all things.
3. By the conſtant practiſe of Godly ſorrow and repentance for the ſins which we ſhall dayly diſcover in our life, which we muſt never diſcontinue to call to minde.

4. By the conſideration of Gods Counſell, which is to manifeſt his ſtrength in our weakneſſe. For which cauſe we ought to reſolve with the Apoſtle (*2 Cor.12,*) to be weake and baſe, that God may be exalted in us. For when we are weakeſt (as he ſaith there) then we are ſtrongeſt.

The heart muſt be affected with brotherly love, & Charity in all undertakings, elſe there is no fitneſſe to edefie: For it is charitie that edifieth, and where that alone is wanting, there all other graces can profit nothing 1 *Cor.13.1.2.*

This then muſt goe through all our endeavours, and be as it were the life and Soule thereof. And to worke it upon our affections.

1. We muſt prevent all preſumptions in Iudging of perſonall intentions, leaſt wee miſinterpret the good meanings of their actions.
2. We muſt frame in our harts a ſincere purpoſe of doing good to all men, to thoſe that we may thinke to be moſt unworthy

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thy of it, that we may be able to overcome the evill which may be in them by good, according to the Apoſtles rule: *Rom.*12.21

3. We muſt remember that God is charity and that we dwell in God ſo long as we remaine in charity 1 *Ioh*,4.14.

4. We muſt ſet before our eyes daily, that we are called to ſerve one another through love *Gal*.5.13 And to fulfill the law of Chriſt, which is to beare one anothers burdens *Gal*.6.2.

This preparation of our heart is the true manner of undertaking the worke which we ſhalbe able to intend, and Conſequently alſo a part of the meanes to bring it to paſſe. But concerning the meanes there is yet a further thought, which Prudencie doth teach in forecaſting the execution, for prudencie is the eye of the minde towards actions, whereby it diſcerneth the way of performance which is moſt anſwerable to the nature of the work intended. If then we conſider that the work intended is nothing elſe but to bring the true profeſſors of the Goſpel vnto a holy ſociety, we may iudg that the ready way to make our undertakings in the execution effectual, wilbe to undertake and do the work ſociably, that is: joyntly and Correſpondently with others.

Therfore when we are reſolved to do our parts, we muſt looke about for Coadiutors and correſpondents. we ought to pick out and ſtirre up thoſe whom we ſhall Iudge fitteſt by reaſon of their holy diſpoſition and Spirituall guifts, and with theſe we ought to communicate our intentions, and Contract a Covenant of mutuall Communiõ & aſſiſtance in theſe indeavours. And this much concerning the ſpiritual undertakings by which the property, manner and means of the bodily vnder takings may be proportionably iudged and diſcerned: For whatſoever is requiſite in the one, is alſo neceſſary for the other, that both may goe hand in hand togeather. And by the meanes of ſome fit Correſpondent, who ſhall through good intelligence (as a Curſitor betwixt them) bring the bodily and ſpirituall undertakers in one Society, the whole worke may proceed by degrees as God ſhall giue a bleſſing.

The fourth and last Duty:

WHen this is done, that is : when men that are able to helpe this Godly worke , haue taken their taſkes, and haue forecaſt the way of bringing their intentions hopefully to paſſe: then nothing remaineth but the reall execution, wherin as every on ſhal ſhew himſelfe faithfull and diligent, ſo he may expect his reward from God, whole kindome hee laboureth to advance according to the guift and talent which he hath received to that effect. For God hath erected vs in the world and given vs all both ſpirituall and bodily things to none other ende but to ſerve his owne glorie, in ſetting up the kingdome of his ſonne, which is righteouſneſſe, peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt, to be propagated, to all men. And thoſe that ſerve Chriſt in theſe things are acceptable unto God, and approved of men *Rom.* 14.18.

But if we ayme not at this, wee miſſe the marke. And if wee now being called upon, refuſe to put forth our helping hand for the reliefe and conſervation of his Church, and heavenly truth, in the midſt of theſe confuſions, deſolations, and Schiſmes whereby that is torne in peeces, and this is obſcured, what can wee expect from the hand of God for ſo great vnthankfulneſſe, cruelty, neglect of our chiefe, and (at this time) almoſt onely duty? but to be deprived of the kingdome of grace, which thus we doe betray, and caſt out of the kingdome of his glory, into the pit of utter darkneſſe where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.

But yet we hope for better things of all ſuch are truely *Children of Sion*. Therefore yee that are watchmen vpon the wals of Ieruſalem hold not your peace day nor night: O yee that make mention of the Lord keepe not ſilence, and giue him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Ieruſalem a praiſe on the earth. *Amen*.

And as many as walke according to this Rule, peace be on them, and upon the Iſraell of God.

AMEN:

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Duties